ANYTHING GOES!

This issue:

MARTY LYLES & HOWARD CRUSE

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. . . and a new Cerebus vignette by

DAVE SIM!

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Recommended for mature readers

CEREBUS in BREAKING UP IS HARD TO DO

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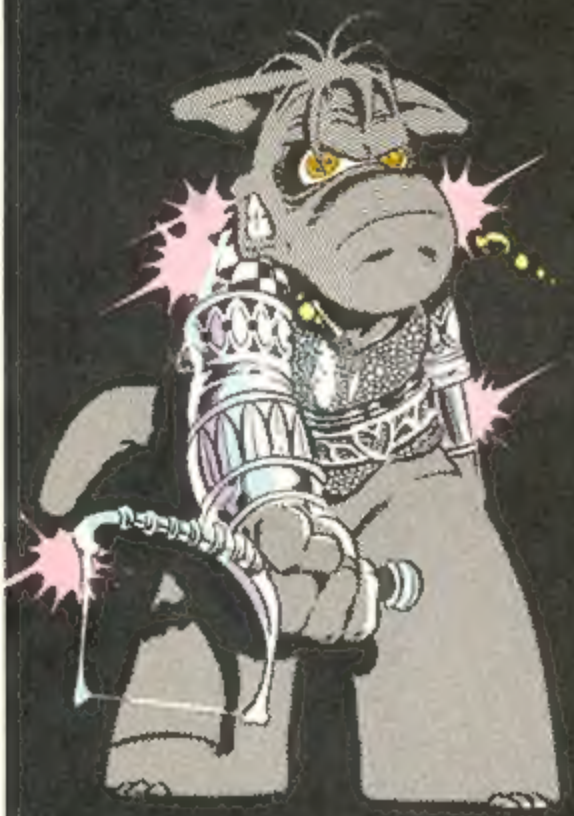

On the occasion of Michelle's abrupt departure (first Michelle, that is; not the Countess), our intrepid Aardvarkian protagonist suffered a condition not unfamiliar to any of us who have traversed the rugged highways and merciless by-ways of loves found and loves lost. It is tempting to say that the Aardvarkian mind is beyond our understanding but, in the opinion of your humble narrator, such assertion smacks of making music by the boneyard.

Who among us could say, with any degree of certainty, that the abrupt and completely unexpected termination of what had been (to that point) a mutually-satisfying and fully acquiesced-to period of cohabital bliss would not compel us to behave in a manner which could most charitably be described as "odd"? Who among us could say, under solemn oath, that the discovery of an elaborate, glistening blouse of fine silks and rare metals, purchased for the Abrupt and Unexpected Terminator at great and impoverishing expense mere days before the unhappy expiration, and with an heirloom cheese-slicer which had been in the family of the pubescent child for countless generations.....?

Who among us could say that we would *not* don the offending garment? Who among us could say that we would not take up the damnable utensil? Who among us could say that we would not go about the appointed tasks of our most recent vocation so-bedecked? To wit; the collecting of mandatory donations for the maintenance and gratification of the governing class and (while supplies last) society as a whole?

These questions are not intended rhetorically, but in the interests of momentum, we shall press on as if they were.

It was the unfortunate lot of one of the local Intelligentsia (as rare an avis in the Aardvarkian age as now), a perceptive chap well-versed in matters arcane and philosophies dangerous of all stripes and persuasions, to be asked to remark upon the condition and implication(s) of the Regional Representative of His Royal Highness' Chancellor of the Exchequer and Agent of the Municipal Treasury going about his appointed rounds dressed in a Panrovian Harem Costume of recent vintage and enforcing the Will of Our Blessed Sovereign with a kitchen utensil of almost unimaginably-limited effectiveness. Being an aficionado of the esoteric, the unusual, the colorful, the excessive, the unique, the eccentric, the different and the varied (in large measure this was the reason his opinion was much-valued in the little community and served to explain the crowd that had gathered to have a listen) he replied, with no little affection.....

"He's bugfuck."

Unfortunate, because it was rumoured that he later died of multiple cheese-slicer wounds administered with great ferocity and no small among of diligence — — — proving, once more, that it is not the inherent appropriateness of a given tool, so much as the determination of its owner to accomplish a task which dictates success or failure. If there is another moral to this tale which escapes your humble narrator, he begs that you attribute the oversight to the limited perceptions to be garnered from a story-teller's humble toil and grants you leave to pursue larger meanings with critics, professors, biographers, attorneys, and others whose livelihoods are predicated upon elaborate landscaping of the simplest molehills.